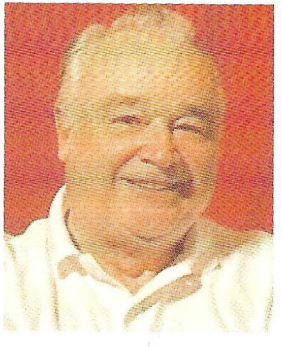
Dan Williams earns MMR 285

Dan Williams is Master Model Railroader Number 285. He is 71 years old, retired, and loving every minute of it. His passions are and have been, his family, bowling, golfing and of course model railroading. He doesn't bowl much anymore but used to bowl with some of the cream of Cleveland's keglers. He has a sanctioned 300 game as well as a couple that aren't. Dan is involved in two golf leagues and is currently the handicapper for one of them. Some of the people from this league play indoor golf during the winter months. It's looked upon as therapy by many. He recently had a hole-in-one on an indoor (computerized) golf course. He is still hoping for the one outside to complete the circle.

Now for his family and the trains. He got into the hobby back in 1958. He happened to see a locomotive kit in a store window and it got his attention and he bought it on an impulse. He took it home and stayed up the entire night putting it together. It looked great. He loved it. But, he lived in a small house with no basement or extra rooms. Dan didn't even know anyone with a layout. He bought some track and a transformer and it ran but nothing to write home about. That was how most of them ran back then.

When his son got to be about three he gave him his old Lionel and some tracks and switches and he was forever laying tracks all over his bedroom. When he was ready to run he'd get Dan or his wife to plug it in for him.

In a couple of years they moved to a house with a basement and he built a layout using three 4x8 sheets of plywood and the cookie cutter method. His son Rob lost interest in trains in favor of sports, the basement got flooded and that was the end of the layout. He tore it down and his daughter, Loraine, took over the basement. She was five when she started taking ballet. By the next year she was teaching all her girlfriends how to dance. Dan can still hear that same record over and over. He hated to have to go to the recitals. Well guess what. She now teaches ballet and he hasn't missed a recital in 40 years. His granddaughters Krystal & Katrese are dancers now. He doesn't mind watching it anymore.



They finally moved to their current home and have lived there for 32 years. They have a basement but when they were having the house built his wife Sam (her real name is Mary) asked him " are you ever going to use the trains?" He said "No, probably not." It wasn't too long after they moved in that he found the boxes of trains and a new layout was in progress. As he started to add another section she stopped him and said, "I thought you said you weren't going to get into this anymore." Sheepishly he said,

"well…" She says, "the basement is for the kids. I'll have the crawl space excavated for you." He thought "yeah sure" but one night after work there were guys downstairs with shovels digging out his room. It's 25'x25' and it's perfect. He loves it.

The layout is called The Brandywine & Cripple Creek. He started it in 1976 but didn't do too much with operating it until about 1993. Dan was a tool engineer and he worked a lot of hours so there wasn't a lot of time left for trains. He retired as the Engineering Manager. He rejoined the NMRA after meeting some members of Division 4 MCR at one of their annual "Carnivals." They sparked his interest in meeting people with the same interests that he has. In 1994, he became a member of the "Rat Pack."

Dan would like to thank a couple of people for making this hobby the fun it is. First he'd like to thank Bruce Brintnall, his AP Chairman, for encouraging him to go for his MMR. Without his pushing he'd probably have fallen by the wayside. Next he'd like to extend his thanks to Dave Marvinney who was the Superintendent of Division 4 and to the members of the Division for fighting for him and others to be active members of their group. Due to his address he was in another division. The members changed their bylaws so that some of them, who were classified to be in other divisions, could be included in their group. Last but not least to Bob Charles for his help in showing them a way to make this happen.

Dan has earned Certificates of Achievement in Master Builder Cars, Master Builder Structures, Master Builder Scenery, Model Railroad Engineer Civil, Model Railroad Engineer Electrical, Chief Dispatcher and Association Volunteer.